



## BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

August 26, 2014 – 6:30 PM  
Rockport Town Hall Annex

**Present:** Board members Dr. Sydney Wedmore, Dr. Russell Sandfield, Richard Meringer, Health Agent Leslie Whelan and Assistant Town Administrator Mitch Vieira.

**6:30 PM:** Meeting called to order.

**Minutes to the July 22, 2014 Meeting:** Mr. Meringer moved to accept; Dr. Sandfield seconded and it was voted unanimously.

**Community Concerns:** None

**Fluoride in Drinking Water:** Dr. Wedmore briefly reviewed the discussions that this Board participated in since April 2014 when they voted that there was not any compelling reason to immediately stop the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water. Since a vote on the subject was not part of the first discussion at the July 22, 2014 meeting, the Board decided to revote the decision. Dr. Sandfield moved that the Board of Health does not support the motion at Town meeting to remove the fluoride from Rockport's drinking water and instead supports leaving things the way they have been for the past thirty-three years. Mr. Meringer seconded and it was voted unanimously. Dr. Wedmore said that the next forum for discussion on fluoride is the fall Town Meeting.

**Stable Regulations Review:** Dr. Wedmore asked the Health Agent for a brief review of the issue with the current stable regulations. The regulations pertaining to the process of applying for a permit for a new stable had been discussed at a previous meeting. Current regulations allow the Health Agent to issue permits for new stables. The Health Agent provided a draft of recommended changes in Sections 11 and 12 of the existing regulations that are reflective of current practice. The changes proposed require a Board of Health review and approval prior to the issuing of any new stable permits. Mr. Meringer moved to accept the proposed changes; Dr. Sandfield seconded and it was voted unanimously. Elaine Somers, the new Animal Inspector, was introduced; then the Health Agent clarified the duties of the Animal Inspector and those of the Animal Control Officer. The Animal Inspector reports to the Health Agent; and the Animal Control Officers are Police Officers.

**Front Beach Stream Study:** This subject originated from the Beach Closure Policy discussion at the previous meeting. Mr. Meringer asked if undertaking this study would provide the Board with any additional useful information to assist with making decisions about closing Front Beach. The general consensus is that the proposed study, as discussed between BioMarine Labs and the Health Agent would obtain informational data but would not be useful for decision making. The Board decided not to undertake any additional studies. The current weekly water testing is satisfactory and the current signage is appropriate.

**Fees for Re-inspection:** The Health Agent reported that three individuals have been charged; one individual has paid and two are currently past due. She asked the Board for guidance in managing the collection of the past due fees. The re-inspection fee policy was reviewed and the details of the two outstanding fees were briefly discussed. Dr. Wedmore requested that the Health Agent use regular and certified mail when the re-inspection fee notice

is issued. The Board directed the Health Agent to involve the Town attorney and follow his recommendation when the re-inspection fees are not paid. The re-inspection fee, \$100 per re-inspection after the first free re-inspection, is to encourage property owners to fix violations timely.

**Housing Inspection Policy:** During a previous meeting, the Board asked the Health Agent to contact the property owner prior to doing a complaint investigation. The Health Agent clarified that the standard practice with peers in other surrounding communities, and also a DPH recommendation, is to conduct the initial investigation without involving the property owner. Dr. Wedmore clarified the Board's position which is to trust the Agent to use her professional judgment when conducting investigations.

**164 Thatcher Road:** The Health Agent did a site visit and reported no evidence of current septic breakout or recent construction in the area. The alleged activity occurred 10 to 12 years ago. This allegation appears to be a piece of a larger problem between neighbors. The Board agreed that no action was required on this complaint.

**Rockport Inn and Suites:** The agent reported that a new U. V. treatment system has been installed and the combined chlorine problem has been remediated. The real test of this system will be in the winter when the windows in the pool area remain closed.

**59 Main Street:** The Agent reported that the owner has been found in contempt of court and the court appointed a Receiver; the repair work has commenced. The owner's attorney is requesting to "stay the receiver"; the Town's attorney does not support this motion. It may be revisited if the property is sold.

**Mosquito Control:** The Health Agent attended a meeting at the State House to discuss changes to current legislation that would allow towns to purchase surveillance-only services from Mosquito Control. At present, Rockport is not a member of the Mosquito Control district.

**Administrative Assistant Position:** Mr. Vieira reported that the interview process was rigorous and Mr. Meringer had participated. A finalist has been selected and an offer of employment will be given once reference checks are successfully completed.

**Health Agent Performance Evaluation:** The Board will schedule a meeting to focus on the upcoming annual performance evaluation. The Health Agent has completed the self-evaluation component.

**Open Meeting Law:** Printed information on Open Meeting Law was provided by the Town Clerk's office. The Board may discuss items brought by citizens in the "Community Concern" section of the meeting and give the Health Agent guidance at that time. Prior to decisions being made, the "Community Concern" must be brought to a future meeting with the item posted.

Adjournment: 7:40 p.m.